

A *Sermon*
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

L O R D S

Spiritual and Temporal in
 Parliament Assembled,

IN

The **ABBET-CHURCH** at *Westminster*,

On the Thirtieth of *January*, 1⁶⁹⁹/₇₀₀.

TITUS ii. 1.

*Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities
 and Powers, to obey Magistrates.*

By the most Reverend Father in GOD,
JOHN Lord Arch-Bishop of *York*.

L O N D O N:

Printed by *H. Hills*, in *Black-Fryars*, near the Water-
 side, For the Benefit of the Poor 1710.

Sach. 118/1(2)

Die Jovis 1^o Februarii, 1699.

IT is Ordered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, That the Thanks of this House be, and are hereby given to His Grace, the Lord Arch-Bishop of *York*, for his Sermon Preach'd before this House, the Thirtieth of *January* last; and he is hereby Desired to Print and Publish the same.

Matth. Johnson,
Cl^r Parliamentor^r.



TITUS iij. 1.

Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates.

YOU all know what kind of Argument this Day calls for. For by the design of keeping it, the business that the Preacher hath to do, is to press Obedience and Subjection to the Government we live under, and to Preach against Faction and Rebellion. And accordingly it is prescribed in the Rubrick of this Day's Service, That if there be a Sermon at all, and not a Homily, it shall be upon this Argument.

It is very well that Authority hath taken care, that at some Solemn Times we should Preach upon this Subject in a more Solemn Manner. Because though it be as needful as any, yet there are some among us that think it a very improper Theme for the Pulpit. I must confels, I had an eye to this Suggestion, when I pitch'd upon these words which I have now read to you : Because I think there is something to be observed in them which will effectually confute it.

St. Paul here lays his Charge upon Titus, that he should put the People that were under his Care in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.

Two things I would here consider. First, the Person that is order'd thus to put the People in mind : And Secondly, the Thing that he is to put them in mind of, which is, Subjection and Obedience to Principalities, and Powers, and Magistrates.

I begin with the First thing, the Person to whom St. Paul writes this Epistle, and to whom he gives it in

Charge, That he should *put the People in mind to be subject.*

Who was this *Person*? Why, it was *Titus*, an Ecclesiastic, a Bishop, a Preacher of the Gospel; not a *Layman*, not a *Magistrate*, but a pure *Church-man*. What can be more plainly gather'd from hence than this; That it is not foreign to a Clergy-man's Office to Preach *Obedience* and *Subjection* to the Government, but, on the contrary, a part of his Function, a necessary Duty incumbent upon him to do it. If any Man affirm otherwise, he must either say, that *St. Paul* did not rightly instruct *Titus* in his Office, but enjoyn'd him to do that which he had nothing to do with: Or he must shew that the Case of *Titus* was different from that of the Ministers of the Gospel at this Day. Neither of which things can, I believe, be easily made out.

And yet into such Times are we fallen, that it is taken ill, by many, that Ministers should in their Pulpit-Discourses meddle with these Matters. I must confess I think, that of all Men, it most concerns a Minister of Religion not to be a *Busie-body*, or a Meddler in other Mens Matters. For in truth he hath Work enough to do of his own; and such a kind of Work too, as, let him behave himself as inoffensively as he can, will create him Difficulties and Enemies enow. And therefore it would be very imprudent in him to usurp other Mens Provinces, and to *burn his fingers* where he needs not. Especially considering that the Success of his Labours and Endeavours among the People doth in a great measure depend upon the good liking they have of him.

But what is it that gives Offence? or what is it that renders this Argument we are speaking of so improper a Subject for a Clergy-man to treat of? Why, several things are pretended, and I shall name some of them.

First, It is said that the work of a Clergy-man, is to instruct Men in Christ's Religion, to Preach against *Vice* and *Sin*, and to Preach up *Holiness* and *good Life*,
and

and mutual *Love* and *Charity* : But what has he to do with *State-Affairs*, as Matters of Government are ?

I Answer, He hath nothing indeed to do with them : But his only work is to make Men good Christians, by endeavouring to possess them with a hearty Belief of our Saviour's Doctrines and Promises, and persuading them to a Conformity in their Lives to his Precepts. This is our proper Work, and this is that we ought to attend to, all the days of our life ; and with *Government* and *State-Affairs* we ought not to meddle, in our *Sermons* especially.

But then, after all this, it doth not follow, but that we are all bound, as we have occasion, to Preach up *Loyalty* and *Obedience* to our *Governours*. For this is no *State-Affair*, but an *Affair* of the *Gospel*. We cannot instruct Men in Christ's Religion, without instructing them in this.

If indeed it was an indifferent thing to a Man's Christianity, or to his Salvation, whether he was a *good* or a *bad* Subject ; Then indeed, it would be as indifferent to a Preacher, whether he insisted on these things to the People : But it is not so.

One great Branch of Christian Holiness, as it is declared in the New Testament, is, That every Man demean himself quietly and peaceably and obediently to the Government he lives under, and that not only for *wrath*, or fear of Punishment, but also for *Conscience-sake*. And this made as necessary a Condition of going to Heaven, as any other particular Vertue is. And therefore if we will instruct Men in Christ's Religion, and in the indispensable Points of Holiness required thereby, we must instruct them in this also.

One great *Vice* and *damnable Sin*, that the Religion of our Lord has caution'd against, is the Sin of *Factionness* and *Rebellion*. And therefore, if it be our Duty to declare against the Sins and Vices that are contrary to Christianity, it is our Duty to declare and caution against this also.

Lastly, We do readily grant that a great part of our Office consists in most affectionately recommending and pressing the Necessity of *mutual Love* and *Charity*. But if this be necessary, is it not more so, to recommend and press *Obedience* to *Authority*, without which *mutual Love* and *Charity* cannot possibly subsist? That being the common Ligament of them; and take away That, we should be no better than *Bears* and *Tygers* one to another.

But it is said, in the *Second* place, That Preachers ought not to meddle with these Points, because they are not competent Judges of them: They do not know the Measures and Limits of *Loyalty* and *Disloyalty*, of being a *good* and a *bad* Subject: These depending altogether upon the Constitution of the Government we live under, and the determining of them belongs to the *Civil Courts*, and not to their Profession.

To this I Answer, That in all those Instances, wherein this Argument falls under the Cognizance and Determination of *Parliaments*, or *Judges*, or *Lawyers*, we do not pretend to meddle with it. And if any Man do, let him answer for himself. All that we pretend to, is to press the plain, general, indispensable Duties of *Obedience* to *Laws*, and of *Peaceableness* and *Subjection* to the *Higher Powers*, which Christ and his Apostles have every-where taught in the Bible.

If indeed a Preacher should in the Pulpit presume to give his Judgment about the Management of Publick Affairs; or to lay down Doctrines as from Christ, about the Forms and Models of Kingdoms or Commonwealths; or to adjust the Limits of the *Prerogative* of the Prince, or of the *Liberties* of the Subject in our present Government; I say, if a Divine should meddle with such matters as these in his Sermons, I do not know how he can be excused from the just Censure of meddling with things that nothing concern him. This is indeed a *Practicing* in *State-Matters*, and is usurping an Office that belongs to another *Profession*, and to Men of another *Character*. And I should account it every whit

as undecent in a Clergy-man to take upon him to deal in these Points ; as it would be for him, to determine *Titles of Land* in the *Pulpit*, which are in Dispute in *Westminster-Hall*.

But what is this to the *Preaching Obedience and Subjection* to the *Establish'd Government*? Let meddling with the *Politicks* be as odious as you please in a Clergy-man ; yet sure it must not only be allow'd to him, but be thought his *Duty* to Exhort all Subjects to be faithful to their Prince, to live peaceably under his Government, and to obey all the *Laws* that are made by just Authority : And even where they cannot obey them, yet to submit, and to raise no Disturbance to the Publick upon that account. And this is the great thing which we say Clergy-men have to do in this Matter.

We meddle not with the *Politicks* ; we meddle not with *Prerogative* or *Property* ; we meddle not with the Disputes and Controversies of Law that may arise about these Matters : But we Preach a company of plain Lessons of *Peaceableness* and *Fidelity*, and *Submission* to our *Rulers* ; such as the Law of Nature teaches ; such as both Christ and his Apostles did preach in all Places where ever they came ; and such as will at this day hold in all the Governments of the World, whether they be *Kingdoms* or *Commonwealths*.

And if at any time we make a particular Application of these General Rules to our own Established Government, it is only in such Instances as are plainly of the Essence of our *National Constitution*. In such Instances, as are plainly contain'd in the *Oaths* of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and those other *Tests*, which, for the Security of the Government, the Law hath taken care that Subjects shall swear to, and consequently must be thought obliged both to understand and practise them. And how can it be an Invasion of another Man's Office to Preach and insist upon such things as these? No, certainly; what it is the Duty of every Subject both to understand and practice in order to his Salvation, *that*, without doubt,

it is the Duty of their Pastors to put them in mind of.

But *Thirdly*, It is said further, That Preachers cannot engage in these Arguments, but they will of necessity side with some *Party* or *Faction* among us : now they should have nothing to do with *Parties* or *Factions*.

To this I Answer, That to be on the Side of the Established Government, and to endeavour to maintain That, is not to be a Favourer of *Parties* and *Factions*. But They are the *Factions*, They are the Setters up, or Abettors of *Parties*, who endeavour to destroy, or unsettle, or disparage, or in the least to hurt and weaken the Government and the Laws as they are established ; let the Principles upon which they go, or the Pretences they make, be what they will. So that a Minister, by Preaching *Obedience* and *Subjection*, doth not in the least make himself of any *Party* ; but, on the contrary, he sets himself against all *Parties* : And so he ought to do. For his Business is, to be on the Side of the Government as it is by Law Established ; and as vigorously as in him lies, in such ways as are proper for his Function, to oppose all those that would either secretly undermine it, or openly assault it : In a word, all those that would make any Change or Innovation in it (by what ever Names they are discriminated) by any other means or methods than what the Law of the Land, and the Nature of the Constitution doth allow.

And thus much of the *First* Thing I took notice of in the Text, *viz.* the *Person* to whom the Charge is here given, That he should put the People in mind. I now come, in the *Second* place, to the *Thing* he was to put them in mind of, and that is, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.*

And here *Two* Things are to be enquired into ; *First*, Who are those *Principalities* and *Powers*, and *Magistrates* to whom we are to be *subject*, and whom we are to *obey*. And, *Secondly*, Wherein consists that *Subjection* and *Obedience* that we are to give them.

As for the *First* of these, Who are the *Principalities* and

and Powers and Magistrates? Why, certainly by these words are meant the *Supreme Civil Governours* of every Nation; and under them, their *subordinate Officers*, let the Form of Government in any Country be what it will; in whomsoever the *Sovereign Authority* is lodged, (whether in one, or in many) They are the *Principalities* and *Powers* to whom we are to be *subject*; and Those that are Commission'd and Deputed to exercise Authority under them, are the *Magistrates* whom we are to *obey*.

St. Peter, in the 2^d Chapter of his 1st Epistle, doth thus expresse them, alluding, no doubt, to the Government of the *Roman State* under which he liv'd, which was then Monarchical) *Submit your selves*, saith he, *πῶς ἀνταρπάγη* *ὑμῶν*, to every *Human Constitution* for the *Lord's sake*: *whether it be to the King, as Supreme*; or unto the *Governours, as unto them that are sent by him* — for so is the *Will of God*.

Upon which words of his, the *Homily* of our Church, appointed to be read on this Day, doth thus glose.

St. Peter doth not say, Submit your selves unto me, as Supreme Head of the Church. Neither, saith he, Submit your selves, from time to time, to my Successors in Rome. But he saith, Submit your selves unto your King, your Supreme Head, and to those that he appointeth in Authority under him. This is God's Ordinance; this is God's Holy Will, that the whole Body in every Realm, and all the Members and Parts of the same, shall be subject to their Head, their King.

As for the *Subjection* and *Obedience* that is to be paid to these *Principalities* and *Powers*, which is the other thing I am to enquire into, it consists of a great many Particulars.

It implies it, for instance, That we should give all Honour, Respect and Reverence to their *Persons*, looking upon them (which really they are) as God's *Vicegerents* upon Earth.

That we should not rashly censure their Actions, or the Administration of their Government.

That we should at no hand despise them, or speak evil

of.

of them, remembering the Character that St. Jude gives of those that *despise Dominions, and speak evil of Dignities.*

That as we should make *Prayers and Supplications, and Intercessions,* and *giving of Thanks* for all Men; so more especially for *Them,* and Those that are put in Authority under Them, as St. Paul teaches us.

That we should pay them the *Tributes and Customs* that are due to them, as the same Apostle expresses it; that is, the Expence we are legally Taxed at, towards the Support of their Government.

That we should, according to our Power, maintain their *Jura Majestatis,* the *Rights and Prerogatives,* belonging by the Constitution, to their Office and Dignity.

That we should assist and defend them against their Enemies.

That we should behave our selves peaceably and modestly in our particular Vocations, endeavouring to make their Government as easie and as happy as we can, but at no hand to invade any *Publick Office* that belongs not to us.

In a word, That we should yield *Obedience* to all their *Laws.* And in case it ever happen that we cannot with a safe Conscience *obey,* there we are patiently to suffer the Penalties of our *Disobedience:* But by no means either to affront their *Persons,* or to disturb their *Government,* by raising or partaking in any *Tumult or Insurrection, or Rebellion.*

All this that I have now named, is contained in that Duty of *Subjection and Obedience* which we are here bid to pay *Principalities and Powers,* as might easily be shewn, as to every Particular: But I will not tire you, by running through all these Heads, and therefore shall only desire leave to speak a little to the *two* last things I have now mention'd; both because they are the most general, and do in a manner comprehend the rest; and because they seem principally intended in the Text I am now discoursing of. *Put them in mind* (saith St. Paul) *to be subject,* and *put them in mind to obey.* In the one Phrase seems to be intimated the Duty of *Active Obedience* to the *Laws and Orders* of our Governours: In the other Phrase, our *Submission* where we cannot *obey.* And

And *First* of all, As for the business of *Active Obedience*, (for it is proper to begin with that first) all that is needful to be said for the clearing of it, may be comprized in these *Four* following Propositions.

1st. That the standing *Laws* of every Country are the Rule of the Subject's *Obedience*, and not meerly the *Will* of the Prince.

Where indeed the *Legislative* and the *Executive* Power are both in one hand, (as it is in those we call *Absolute Monarchies*) there the *Will* of the Prince stands for *Law*. But where People are so happy as to live under a *Legal* Establishment, as ours is, there the *Publick* Laws must govern and steer their Actions, and not the Prince's *private* Pleasure. So that tho' the *King can do no wrong*, (as Maxim is) yet the Subject is answerable for every thing he doth against Law, even when he doth it by the King's Command.

2^{dly}. Whatever Laws are made by Just Authority, whether in *Civil* Matters, or in Matters relating to *Religion*; if they be not contrary to God's Laws, there the Subject is bound in Conscience to obey them, even tho' he apprehends they are inconvenient.

I own indeed that the *Matter* of some Laws may be of so small importance, that a Man shall not need much to charge his Conscience with the Observance of them: It being enough that he submits to the *Penalty*, in case of Transgression: And perhaps the Government never meant to extend their Obligation farther. But for all that, it is in the Power of the *Legislative*, when there is reason to bind our Consciences to *Obedience*, as well as to award Punishments to our *Disobedience*. And the Reason of this is evident, because we are bound by the Laws of God, who hath the Supreme Dominion over our Consciences, to obey our *Lawful Governours* in *Lawful things*.

Nay, I say farther, (which is my *3^d* Proposition,) That even where we *doubt* of the Lawfulness of their Commands, we are bound to obey; so long as we only
doubt

doubt of their Lawfulness, but are not *persuaded* that they are unlawful.

For certainly the Authority of our Governours ought to over-rule any Man's private Doubts. There is all the Reason in the World that it should do so: And there is no good Reason to be urged to the contrary.

Pray, what is it we mean, when we say that a Man *doubts* concerning a thing, whether it be lawful or no? Is it not this? that his Judgment is kept suspended between equal Probabilities on both sides of a Question. He is inclin'd by some Reasons to believe that the thing is *lawful*, and he is inclin'd by other Reasons to believe that the thing is *unlawful*. And these Reasons do appear so equally probable to him on both sides, that he doth not know how to determine himself: He doth not know which way he should frame a Judgment about the point in question.

This is the Notion of a *Doubt*. Now in such a Case as this, when *Authority* interposeth, and declareth it self on one side; and pronounceth not only that the thing is lawful to be done, but also, that it will have it done; and accordingly lays its Commands upon the Man to do it: I say, if there be not so much weight in *Authority* as to turn the Scale in such a Case as this, and to oblige a Man to act in obedience to it; it is the lightest thing in the World, and signifies very little as to the influencing the Affairs of Mankind.

But, 4thly, and lastly; If the Matter be out of doubt: If a Man be really convinc'd that the thing which *Authority* commands him, is not lawful in it self, but is contradictory to the Laws of God: In that case he must not do the thing commanded; on the contrary, he is bound to forbear the Practice of it.

If any Human Law, let it be made by the best Authority upon Earth, should command us to *believe* any Point in Matters of *Faith*, which we are persuaded to be contrary to the Revelation of Christ and his Apostles; or should command us to *profess* and declare our Belief

Belief of any Matter whatsoever, tho' never so indifferent, when yet we did not really *believe* it; or, lastly, should oblige us to the doing of any *Action* which we did in our own Conscience judge to be a Transgression of a Divine Command: I say, in none of these Cases are we to yield Obedience to the *Law*, by what Authority soever it was Enacted. And the Reason is plain: We must always chuse to obey *God* rather than *Men*. Where God's Law hath commanded us, there no Human Law can absolve us from the Obligation. Where God's Law hath forbidden us, there no Human Law can lay Obligations upon us.

And it is the same thing as to our Practice, that we *believe* God's Law hath ty'd us up, as if it had really done so: So that, whether we are really in the right or in the wrong, as to our *Persuasions* in these Matters, we must not act against them; because we must not act against our Consciences. Only this we are to remember, That it extremely concerns us rightly to inform our Consciences in these Matters where Human Laws have interposed their Authority. For if we make a wrong Judgment of Things, and upon that account deny our Obedience to the Laws, where we should have given it: Though we ought not to act against our Conscience, as I said, (nay, it would be a great Sin in us if we should;) yet, on the other side, we are not to be excused for disobeying the Commands of Authority, where we might lawfully have obeyed them; unless it should prove that it was through no fault of ours that our Judgments were misinformed.

And thus much concerning my *First* Head, that of *Obedience to Laws*: I now come to the other, that of *Subjection*; as that word implies *patient* Submission to our Governours, where we cannot *actively* comply with what they require of us.

And this is that Doctrine of *Passive Obedience* which of late hath had so ill a Sound among many of us: But dare say, for no other reason, but because it may have been

been by some misrepresented. For where-ever it is rightly understood, it can give offence to none but such as are really disaffected to the Government, and do desire Alterations.

That there is such a *Submission* due from all Subjects to the Supreme Authority of the Place where they live, as shall tie up their Hands from Opposing or Resisting it by Force, is evident from the very Nature and Ends of *Political Society*. And I dare say, there is not that Country upon Earth, let the Form of their Government be what it will, (*Absolute Monarchy, Legal Monarchy, Aristocracy, or Commonwealth*) where this is not a part of the Constitution. Subjects must obey *Passively*, where they cannot obey *Actively*: Otherwise the Government would be precarious, and the Publick Peace at the Mercy of every Male-content, and a Door would be set open to all the Insurrections, Rebellions and Treasons in the World.

Nor is this only a *State Doctrine*, but the Doctrine also of *Jesus Christ*, and that a necessary, indispensable one too; as sufficiently appears from those famous words of *St. Paul, Rom. 13. 1, 2.* which are so plain, that they need no Comment: *Let every Soul (saith he) be subject to the Higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God; and the Powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.* So that so long as this Text stands in our Bibles, the Doctrine of *Non-Resistance* or *Passive Obedience* must be of Obligation to all Christians.

But then, after I have said this, care must be taken that this *General Doctrine* be not misapplied in particular Countries. Though *Non-Resistance* or *Passive Obedience* be a Duty to all Subjects, and under all Governments, yet it is not expressed the same way in all Places; but both the *Objects* and the *Instances* of it do vary in different Nations, according to the different Models of their Government.

To

To speak this as plainly as I can? As the Laws of the Land are the Measures of our *Active Obedience*; so are also the same Laws the Measures of our *Submission*. And as we are not bound to *obey* but where the Laws and Constitution require our *Obedience*; so neither are we bound to *submit* but as the Laws and Constitution do require our *Submission*.

Taking now this to be the true stating of the Doctrine of *Passive Obedience*, as I verily believe it is, I do not see what colour of Reason can be offered against it. Sure I am, the common Pretence, That it tends to introduce *Tyranny*, and *Arbitrary Government*, and to make People *Slaves*, is quite out of doors. For you see it makes no Princes *Absolute*, where, by the Constitution, they were not so before. Nor doth it destroy any *Liberty* of the Subjects that they were before in Possession of. All that it doth, is to preserve and secure the National Settlement in the same *Posture*, and upon the same *Foot*, in and upon which it is already Establish'd. And this is so true, that there is not a Commonwealth in the World so free, but that these Doctrines of *Non-Resistance* and *Passive Obedience* must for ever be taught there, as necessary even for the Preservation of their *Liberties*.

As for what this Doctrine imports among us, and in our Constitution, or how far it is to be extended or limited, it belongs not to me to determine. But thus much the Occasion of this Day's Meeting will not only warrant me, but oblige me to say upon this Head, and it is all the *Application* I shall now make; namely,

That by all the Laws of this Land, the *Person* of the KING is Sacred and Inviolable; and that to attempt his *Life* in any way, or upon any pretence, always was and is *High-Treason*. And if so, what are we to think of that *Fact* which was on this Day committed upon the *Person* of our late Sovereign, of Blessed Memory, King *Charles I.* taking it with all its Circumstances? Why certainly, how slight soever some People among
us

us may make of it, it was a most Barbarous Murther? a Violation of the Laws of God and Man, a Scandal to the *Protestant Religion*, and a Reproach to the People of *England*; whilst the impious Rage of a *Few*, stands imputed by our Adversaries to the whole Nation. All this I may say of this *Fact*; for it is more than is said of it by the *Lords and Commons of England*, in that Act of Parliament which appoints the keeping of this Day as a Perpetual *Fast*.

I am sensible how *uneasie* some are at the mentioning of this; and how gladly they would have both the Thing, and the Memorial of it, forgot among us. I must confess, I could wish so too, provided we were sure that God had forgot it; so, I mean, forgot it, as that no longer obnoxious to his Judgments, upon the account of that Innocent Blood: And provided likewise, in the Second place, that those *Factionous Republican* Principles, which have once over-turn'd our Government, and brought an excellent Prince to an unhappy End, were so far forgot among us, as that there was no Danger from them, of ever having this or the like *Tragedy* acted again in our Nation. But so long as we have Apprehensions from either of these things, so long it will be fit for us to remember this *Fact*, and this *Day*; and both to implore the Mercy of God, that neither the Guilt of that Sacred and Innocent Blood, nor those other Sins by which God was provoked to deliver up both us and our King into the Hands of cruel and unreasonable Men, may at any time hereafter be visited among us, or our Posterity: And likewise to suffer our selves to be put in mind of that Duty, which, by St. Paul's Authority, I have been all this while insisting on; namely, to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates: Or, if you will rather take it in the words of Solomon, Prov. 24. 21. to fear the Lord and the King, and not to meddle with them that are given to change.

FINIS.



